

REMARKS

Claims 1, 2 and 5-11 have been canceled, and claims 3 and 4 are presented for further examination.

The rejections of claims 1 and 2 over prior art have been rendered moot by cancellation of the involved.

The rejection of claims 3 and 4 under 35 U.S.C. §102(e) over Sumida et al., US 2004/0106755 is respectfully traversed.

The Sumida et al. published application is not proper prior art against the present application because its August 6, 2003 filing date is subsequent to the September 27, 2002 convention priority date to which the instant application is entitled. A proper Claim of Priority together with duly certified copies of Applicants' two Japanese priority applications filed September 27, 2002 were duly submitted to the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office on February 12, 2004. A verified English translation of one priority application, Japanese patent application no. JP 2002-282543, which fully supports the subject matter of claims 3 and 4, has been ordered and will be submitted as soon as received. Reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejection are accordingly respectfully requested.

In view of the foregoing, the application is respectfully submitted to be in condition for allowance, and prompt, favorable action thereon is earnestly solicited.

If there are any questions regarding this amendment or the application in general, a telephone call to the undersigned at (202) 624-2845 would be appreciated since this should expedite the prosecution of the application for all concerned.

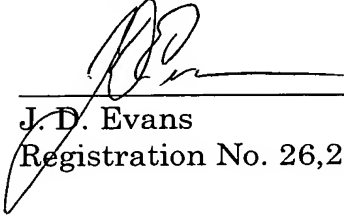
If necessary to effect a timely response, this paper should be considered as a petition for an Extension of Time sufficient to effect a timely response, and

Application No. 10/670,744
Reply to Office Action
March 22, 2006

please charge any deficiency in fees or credit any overpayments to Deposit
Account No. 05-1323 (Docket #038788.52799US).

Respectfully submitted,

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